

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please delete the section entitled "SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION" in its entirety and substitute the following section therefor:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0021] The present invention, among other applications, is directed to solving these and other problems and disadvantages of the prior art. The present invention provides a superior technique for performing cryptographic operations within a microprocessor. In one embodiment, an apparatus in a microprocessor is provided for accomplishing cryptographic operations. The apparatus includes a cryptographic~~---instruction---and execution---logic~~. The cryptographic instruction is received by a ~~computing device/microprocessor~~ as part of an instruction flow executing on the ~~computing device/microprocessor~~, wherein the cryptographic instruction prescribes an encryption operation to be executed on a plurality of input text blocks that are in memory to generate a corresponding plurality of ciphertext blocks, and to store the corresponding plurality of ciphertext blocks in said memory, and where the cryptographic instruction also prescribes one of a plurality of block cipher modes to be employed in accomplishing the encryption operation. ~~The microprocessor has execution logic.~~ The execution logic is operatively coupled to the cryptographic instruction and executes the encryption operation. The execution logic includes a cryptography unit that executes a plurality of cryptographic rounds on each of the plurality of input text blocks to generate a corresponding one of said plurality of ciphertext blocks, where the plurality of cryptographic rounds are prescribed by a control word that is provided to the cryptography unit, and where the plurality of input text blocks are retrieved from said memory, and where the plurality of corresponding ciphertext blocks are stored to the memory. The encryption operation includes indicating whether the encryption operation has been interrupted by an interrupting event.

[0022] One aspect of the present invention contemplates a apparatus for performing cryptographic operations. The apparatus includes a cryptography unit within a ~~device/microprocessor~~, block pointer logic, and a bit within a register. The cryptography

unit executes decryption operation responsive to receipt of a cryptographic instruction within an instruction flow that prescribes the decryption operation, where the cryptography unit is configured execute a plurality of cryptographic rounds on each of a plurality of input data blocks to generate a corresponding each of a plurality of plaintext blocks, and where the plurality of input data blocks are retrieved from memory, and where the plurality of plaintext blocks are stored to the memory. The block pointer logic is operatively coupled to the cryptography unit. The block pointer logic is configured to direct the ~~device~~microprocessor to modify pointers to the plurality of input and plaintext blocks in memory to point to next input and plaintext blocks at the completion of the decryption operation on a current input data block. The bit within the register is operatively coupled to the cryptography unit. The bit indicates that execution of the decryption operation has been interrupted by an interrupting event.

[0023] Another aspect of the present invention comprehends a method for performing cryptographic operations in a ~~device~~microprocessor. The method includes fetching a cryptographic instruction from memory, wherein the cryptographic instruction prescribes one of the cryptographic operations along with one of a plurality of block cipher modes to be employed when performing the one of the cryptographic operations; retrieving a plurality of input data blocks from memory; via execution logic within the microprocessor, employing the one of a plurality of block cipher modes and executing the one of the cryptographic operations on the plurality of input data blocks to generate a corresponding plurality of output data blocks, where the executing is performed responsive to the fetching; storing the corresponding plurality of output text blocks to the memory; and indicating whether an interrupting event has occurred during said executing.